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Jeane's Designs

Henry Kissinger . . . Zbigniew Brzezinski . . . Jeane Kirkpatrick. Different genders, different parties, different Presidents, different jobs, but they all have one thing in common: each was a political scientist before choosing to serve power.

Kissinger was the only one who did not have Kissinger as a role model. Operating in unfamiliar terrain, he first made himself known as a scholar; tenure at Harvard seemed the highest ambition to which he could aspire. He did not get it, at least on his first attempt.

Brzezinski also taught at Harvard, but moved to Columbia in a trade for Samuel P. Huntington, and established his own academic reputation as a theoretician of social change. Teaching for eight years in New York while his archrival was transforming the globe from Washington, Brzezinski was torn between the world of ideas and the world of power. And so he kept one foot in each, writing books and articles that were in part scholarly disquisitions and in part expressions of his willingness to serve in government.

With Kirkpatrick, scholarship was always secondary to the drive for power. Twelve years after receiving her doctorate from Columbia (in the same year that Kissinger went to work for Nixon), when most of her graduate-school colleagues were lucky to be associate professors, she was appointed American Ambassador to the United Nations.

The less the political-science profession studied power, the more its practitioners became attracted to the exercise of it. Political science in the United States began as a form of service to government, training administrators to work in the public interest. But the professors themselves, despite occasional trips to Washington to chair a commission or to serve on leave, considered themselves part of the academic community, subject to its rules of conduct. Charles Merriam, the premier political scientist-public servant of the first half of this century, was an institutional fixture at the University of Chicago.

Just as the Great Depression transformed the economics profession, turning out "activist" Keynesians determined to fine-tune the economy, so World War II and the emergence of imperial America revolutionized the political scientist, pointing him toward Washington and the need to fine-tune the world. Typical of the new breed of activists were two brothers, Lyman and Evron Kirkpatrick. The former served for years with the Central Intelligence Agency. The latter, Jeane's husband, was Hubert Humphrey's campaign manager when he ran for mayor of Minneapolis and moved to Washington with Senator Humphrey in 1948. (Humphrey ran as a vociferous anti-Communist in these years.) Evron Kirkpatrick became executive director of the American Political Science Association and was also active in a C.I.A. front called Operations and Policy Research Inc. When a

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his wife, whom he married in 1955. In the hothouse atmosphere of Washington, Jeane Kirkpatrick became an intensely political academic. In the 1960s, when cold-war liberalism reigned in the capital, she was a cold-war liberal. No doubt her shift to the right was sincere; how fortunate for her, then, that power in Washington also shifted to the right. Kirkpatrick published a couple of books and wrote articles, but unlike Kissinger or Brzezinski, she never made a major contribution to political theory.

Nonetheless, she was an academic success, of a unique sort. Before assuming the U.N. post, she was Leavy Professor of the Foundations of Human Freedom at Georgetown University and a resident scholar at the American Enterprise Institute, both institutions somewhat suspect as centers of independent thought but both quite respected as centers of power and influence. She could not have been unaware of Hans Morgenthau's dictum that "truth threatens power, and power threatens truth," for Kirkpatrick's published work is *The Prince* without the Borgias, a sycophantic attempt to flatter the prejudices of the powerful. Kirkpatrick is not one to allow truth to stand in the way of her mission.

Nowhere is Kirkpatrick's low regard for fact better illustrated than in the famous article "Dictatorships & Double Standards" (*Commentary*, November 1979), which brought her to the attention of Ronald Reagan. A reader of this article will learn that the Chinese leadership is "hostile to American interests and policies," which might surprise both them and us. Ayatollah Khomeini is described as a "Soviet client," which might equally surprise the Russians. The hypothesis that "traditional authoritarian governments are less repressive than revolutionary autocracies" is offered as a truth for which "the evidence . . . is clear enough." Yet no one, to my knowledge, has demonstrated that the Sandinists in Nicaragua and the revolutionaries in Iran—the two countries that occupy Kirkpatrick's main attention in this article—killed or imprisoned more people than the dictatorships they replaced. Kirkpatrick's chauvinism—her article suggests that Third World nations are incapable of democracy, and are thus doomed to a choice between their

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